

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MAY 25, 2012

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 24, 2012

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2011–12 REGULAR SESSION

## ASSEMBLY BILL

**No. 2392**

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**Introduced by Assembly Member John A. Pérez**

February 24, 2012

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An act to add Article 4.6 (commencing with Section 14146) to Chapter 7 of Part 3 of Division 9 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to Medi-Cal.

### LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2392, as amended, John A. Pérez. Medi-Cal: interpreter services.

Existing law provides for the Medi-Cal program, which is administered by the State Department of Health Care Services, under which qualified low-income individuals receive health care services. The Medi-Cal program is, in part, governed and funded by federal Medicaid Program provisions. Existing federal law provides for increased administrative funding for translation and interpretation services provided in connection with the enrollment-of, retention-of, and use of services under the Medicaid Program.

This bill would require the department to seek federal funding to establish a program to provide and reimburse for medical interpretation services to Medi-Cal beneficiaries who are limited English proficient. *The bill would require the department to leverage existing funding to fully offset any General Fund costs of the program, as specified.*

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.  
State-mandated local program: no.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

SECTION 1. It is the intent of the Legislature to do all of the following:

(a) Create a program that shall provide reliable access to language interpretation for Medi-Cal beneficiaries who are limited English proficient.

(b) Establish a mechanism for accessing federal Medicaid matching funds to provide funding for the program.

(c) Enable trained and qualified interpreters to meet the demand for language services for a significant portion of Medi-Cal beneficiaries with limited English proficiency.

(d) Facilitate accurate and timely communication between limited English proficient patients and their health care providers, which will improve quality of care, reduce medical errors, increase patient understanding and compliance with health diagnoses and care plans, and reduce the cost of health care by eliminating unnecessary tests and other care.

SEC. 2. Article 4.6 (commencing with Section 14146) is added to Chapter 7 of Part 3 of Division 9 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, to read:

Article 4.6. Medi-Cal Medical Interpretation Services

14146. (a) The department shall seek federal funding to establish a program to provide and reimburse for certified medical interpretation services to Medi-Cal beneficiaries who are limited English proficient.

(b) The program shall offer medical interpreter services to Medi-Cal providers serving Medi-Cal beneficiaries on either a fee-for-service or managed care basis pursuant to this article.

(c) A health care provider or entity entering into a Medi-Cal provider agreement or a Medi-Cal managed care contract with the state, including Medi-Cal managed care organizations (MMCOs) and their subcontracting plans, and fee-for-service providers, may utilize the program to provide medical interpreter services to Medi-Cal beneficiaries.

(d) All contracts between MMCOs and their subcontractors, including health providers and other health plans, shall include

1 provisions describing access to medical interpreter services under  
2 this program.

3 (e) The department shall pursue all available sources of federal  
4 funding to establish and administer the program and shall seek any  
5 federal approvals necessary to implement this article.

6 (f) *For purposes of this article, the department shall develop a*  
7 *mechanism to leverage existing sources of funding associated with*  
8 *medical interpretation services, in order to fully offset state*  
9 *General Fund costs for the provision of medical interpretation*  
10 *services and program administration.*